THE

Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"*Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day.*"

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THE *Sunday Review* for April last contains an excellent article by John Trist on "Adult Education." The writer, taking a comprehensive view of the religious and secular systems of education, points out the inadequacy of both to supply the necessary pabulum for the harmonious development of humanity. The suggestions offered by him, he says, "are only intended for those who are on the look out for the next stage in the religious development of mankind;" and the principle propounded as the basis of these suggestions is no more or less than that enunciated by the Spiritualists, and practically carried out in their Lyceums. We do not suspect him of plagiarism, but see in the conception of his mind an illustration of the tendency of advanced thought towards the harmonial philosophy. The idea is thus expressed by him:—

"It is not enough to possess a direct aim in the culture of the mind; we must circumvent the entire nature. and know it in all its completeness. Nay more, we can only rightly direct the aim by a comprehensive knowledge of the entire life and its ever-varying necessities. Education, rightly interpreted, means the development of the entire man; and religion really means the same. In order to cultivate the whole man, man in his entirety must be addressed, the totality of his being exercised; and for this a many-sided mode of address must be adopted. Erroneously it has been assumed that a spoken word was enough to rouse the latent manhood, and to discipline the rebellious instincts of our nature.

In reality the Church is a school, and thus includes a gymnasium, classes for instruction, social communion, and the playground. It were just as idle for purposes of youthful development that only one of these should be regarded, as that religious communities should limit themselves to one means and anticipate a multiform and complete product as the result.

The whole of man's nature must be appealed to in order that his development may be thorough. Nor will it be enough to say that a religious organisation can only undertake that branch which is directly religious or immediately calculated to attain its end. So interrelated and interdependent is the human mind, that it is impossible for us to say what does and what does not contribute to his highest good. The mind is a universe, and, like the universe, needs an adaptation of means to ends, of part to part; and, like the universe, is affected in its remotest spheres by causes which would seem to be quite inadequate to achieve such a result. Anything is good that does good, and things which lay claim to the distinction of pre-eminent excellence are no good at all unless they serve a good purpose."

The above extract is pithy and philosophical; it contains a great truth not generally apprehended—the principle of harmony underlying all true development. The infant may be likened to an instrument with many strings, all slack and untuned, and education as the tension and tuning of these various strings. If the attention of the educator is concentrated on two or three strings he may produce sweet monotones, but it requires the proper adjustment and tuning of the whole instrument to produce full chords of harmony. Thoughtfu Spiritualists, by the sympathy of their minds with the harmonious conditions existing in the more advanced spheres of the Spirit-world, have intuitively perceived this truth, and, where circumstances have permitted have applied it in their own cases, and advocated it in their writings and discourses, the most direct and practical application being the Children's Progressive Lyceum, in which school the primary idea is the education and exercise of the Physical, Intellectual and Religious natures each in their due proportion. It will readily be seen that in the present condition of society an experiment of this sort can only be carried out by voluntary effort. Hence it is necessarily limited to the one day in the week when those philanthropical progressionists, whose business or professional duties occupy the other six, are at liberty to work for the coming generation; but by-and-by, when the fruits of their labors become manifest, we hope to see the principle extended to the normal schools, where its adoption would become a powerful lever to raise humanity to a higher plane.

WE have received a prospectus of a contemplated new weekly paper devoted to Spiritualism, and the Harmonial Philosophy. It is to be entitled the *Voice of Truth*, and will be published at Memphis, Tennessee, under the joint editorship of Mary D. Shindler and Annie C. T. Hawks, whose names are not unfamiliar to the readers of American Spiritualistic journals. The prospectus is a promising one, but want of space prevents our publishing it.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

WAS CHRIST GOD?

To the Editor of the Harbinger of Light.

Dear Sir,—I am very much obliged to "Investigator" for the sincere and able manner in which he treats of my communication to your journal in his letter of 10th ultimo. I am also pleased to find we agree there is much in both Testaments—particularly the Old—that is fabulous and immoral.

The New Testament relates all the circumstances of Christ's birth; and the majority of Christians not only believe that he was the Son of God, but that he was actually God himself.

Every one of course ought to be at liberty to think what he pleases; in my turn I may perhaps be permitted to think that (if Christ was God himself) the New Testament could not relate the events of his birth. Since we all know that God had no beginning, he could not, therefore, be born anywhere, nor in any form, whether human or divine; and if he had really transformed himself into the form of man, in whose shape he came on earth for a short time, he had recourse to a false personification, or a disguise. This is not very likely on the part of our great Jehovah. I may, however, on a future occasion come to this subject again.

The New Testament relates, also, the barbarous and brutal crucifixion of Christ. This (although it occurred so far back as 1800 years ago) we may readily believe, because it was the natural consequence of a fanatic animosity (prevalent in those antique ages of heinous superstition and savage intolerance), of which we have had even many specimens in more recent periods by other fanatic sects, who unmercifully slaughtered their fellow-creatures for the sole desire of religious domination. We may also believe that Christ was an enlightened man (especially for the dark periods in which he lived), and that he wished to propagate the moral precepts of his gospel with a view of improving people's mental condition. All this may be correct, and does not challenge any comment.

It is likewise presumable that Christ imagined, perhaps, that he was performing a sacred duty in risking his life for the moral welfare of mankind. We have had many other men who had similar fancies in former centuries. Even in recent times, many missionaries have sacrificed their lives to some such ends; even run that risk this very day, by preaching the Gospel in foreign countries, in which many of them have died, and still die martyrs to their religious pursuits. Therefore, we may well credit the records of Christ's martyrdom, or death for the same cause.

But a thing upon which we cannot rely with the same readiness is, that God accepted Christ's sacrifice, and will on that account forgive our sins.

Another thing which we cannot so easily credit either is, that Christ is the Divine Son of God; and still less, that he is God himself, as the adepts of the Bible insinuate; an insinuation which can be nullified without difficulty; the more so, that Christ himself gives a formal denial to that denomination by calling God his heavenly Father, and by addressing prayers to him.

Hence, if he is the Son, as his prayers seem to indicate, he cannot be the Father, for if he were the devotions he addressed to God would have been mockeries. On the other hand, if he is the Father, his devotions to himself would be a ridiculous farce.

Christ could, of course, as we all can, be called the Son of God, who is the heavenly Father of every one; but then he cannot be God himself, no more than any one of us can. So the allegation, that Christ was no other than God in a human shape, is undoubtedly a falsehood; although he often assumed in his preaching a celestial self-authority, which in some degree discredited his apparent modesty or sincerity, and might perhaps be taxed as a fraud, if not a sacrilege; but having to deal with a fanatic and mistrusting mob, he was compelled, like Moses and Mahomet, to have recourse to all sorts of subterfuges in order to be listened to.

Now, whether the above account is true or false, it is at all events not likely that God desired Christ's awful agony and shocking death for the sole purpose of pardoning our sins, and to show by that cruel butchery how kind and merciful he is towards men, and how ardently he loves them. Would this dreadful process not have been rather a strange way of showing mercy and kindness to men?

Expecting to see another letter from the pen of "Investigator" at an early date,

I am,
Dear Sir,
Yours truly,
LAYMAN.

Vaughan, August 20th, 1877.

DIVINISM.

To the Editor of the Harbinger of Light.

Sir,—I, the other day, purchased at your bookselling establishment a pamphlet, entitled "The Divinism," in which are stated many truisms; but while giving the author, who writes under the *nom de plume* of "Melchior," credit for conscientious earnestness, it is evident to me that he has based his deductions on false premises, and has attempted to fathom the Spiritual by his knowledge of things material, and the Infinite by his finite understanding; consequently he denies the existence of God.

From the irrationality of the "Orthodox" conception of a personal, consequently limited, localised Deity, the author takes his view of truth from the other extremity of the stroke of the pendulum, totally unconscious apparently that the happy mean, where the pendulum is perpendicular, is the only correct standpoint to arrive at the great desideratum, viz., Truth.

"Melchior" has assumed that "personality," as applied to the marvellous power pervading the illimitable universe, is synonymous with "individuality," whereas the one implies limit, the other to that which pertains to one with or without limitation. An infinite individuality is possible, but an infinite personality is absurd. The Infinite Spirit, to whom man has given the name of "God,' pervades all space, which having no limit, God therefore cannot be of a material form. On the affirmation, by the devotees of this *materialistic form*, of such concentration, "Melchior" evidently bases his assertion "that the existence of a God is a mere impossibility." Infinity in duration is equally as inconceivable by finite man as infinity in space—time and space being "twin sisters."

The author remarks, that "all theologies are mythologies." Doubtless, the greater portion of them are such, but in each there is a quantum of truth, otherwise the human mind, gullible as it is, would not have accepted them. He further says—"The adorer of an infinite God is nothing but a worshipper of an infinite nullity." Had he written that the adorer of a finite God is nothing but a worshipper of a finite nullity there would have been some truth in the assertion.

"Matter is not extracted from nothing," he says, evidently referring to the puerile and erroneous Biblical story that God made all things out of nothing. God and matter ("matter" in the primoidal state) are increate, consequently co-eternal and co-essential principles—the one perfection, therefore changeless; the other imperfection, consequently subjected to ceaseless change by the inexorable law of progression.

Although I admit that it is impossible for the finite to comprehend the Infinite, yet I cannot agree with the author that "God is better understood by ignorance than by knowledge." On the contrary, the more we understand of Nature's laws, which reflect God's wisdom and power over matter, the better and higher are our conceptions of Deity—imperfect, at least, as these conceptions are.

I thoroughly coincide with "Melchior" when he says that "the God of the Theologians is certainly not the author of Nature;" that "the theological God is a monster of confusion, not a Lord of righteousness;" that

"only by wisdom can people be made happy, and Wisdom will reign when the sceptre shall *be* Justice;" that "the laws of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness exist in the harmony of the Universe;" that, "examined by the human intelligence, the physical laws become universal principles, and constitute the Mathematics, Æsthetics, and Morals;" that "it is perfectly wrong that the material world has been taken from nothing through 'the word,' as stated by the Bible;" that "the material world is increate and eternal;" that "a good thinker is as rare as gold, and true knowledge is a diamond of invaluable price;" that "allied by Nature, we become beasts by religion." This opposition and antagonism by what, in courtesy, is called "Religion," unmistakeably proves that this theological *spouse* is the decided enemy to the well-being and harmony of mankind. If this wretched thing named "Religion" were true, its devotees would be more enlightened and rational, and view Truth as the essential and indispensible adjunct to their mode of worship. That such is not the case the present attitude of the multiplicity of Sects most forcibly proclaims.

"Melchior" insists that permission of evil is equivalent to the commission of evil on the part of Deity, being apparently unmindful of the necessity of the existence of evil as the antithesis of good; and that man, being a free-will agent, the permission of evil is necessary to maintain freedom of will, notwithstanding his assertion to the contrary; for free-will must imply the power to choose between right and wrong. The author, on one page of "Divinism," admits that man is free, and states that "he has intelligence to know the good and bad—such knowledge is for selection—to select is an act of liberty—then man is free."

He is right in stating that the Biblical dogma of "original sin is a ridiculous and atrocious fable," and that "knowledge, vice, virtue are personal, not transferable, or imputable to another;" also, that "in following the rectitude of his heart man does better than by following the example of the Gospel's cruel and irrational God." He ascribes the success of the various religions to their absurdities; which he affirms "strike the ignorant, and, by astonisment, subdue them—making them believe that which is irrational and debasing;" whilst he states that "Science, to be popular, must be clear, sure and intelligible." He might have added, "and must not transcend their limited conception of the bounds of Nature's laws."

I agree with "Melchior" that "Truth is the object of all the natural Sciences; Beauty of all the æsthetical arts; Goodness of all the moral doctrines;" that "hatred against iniquity, the pleasure of doing good, the firmness of character, the honor of word—such are the elements of civilization;" that "he who is inclined to practise virtue will do it without theology;" that "for him who is adverse to honesty, all theologies are useless;" that "Truth is stronger than fiction, Truth is Nature, fiction is art, art of darkness, not of Light;" that the established "religions are nothing but contradictions;" that man, having the rule of right with him—"a noble and perfect law—this, and no other, is the only and divine religion; and all so-called revelations are nothing but fables and impostures—the origin of superstitions, of intolerance, of wars, massacres and miseries." "What religion more right and noble than that which Nature has written in our breasts?"

This pamphlet is well worthy of perusal, notwithstanding some of its fallacious arguments, and although it does not admit the *principal half of Nature*, viz., the Spiritual, but substitutes the Rhythmical in its stead, the writer evidently being oblivious to the fact that Rhythm is merely the antithesis of disonance, as good is of evil; and to truly discern the difference in these opposites we should freely and without bias, exercise The Divine Gift of Reason—the only guide and protector against the crudities and false teachings of theology, as well as all errors which otherwise are apt to mislead.

I should like to ask "Melchior"—Can that "Divinism," to which he alludes, have sprung into existence independently of a Divine Source?—And what objection is there, when referring to that Great First Cause, or Source, to our using the appellation—God?

I conclude by subscribing myself as

A RATIONAL CHRISTIAN THOUGH NO BIBLIOLATER.

DIRECT SPIRIT-WRITING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—I have for the last ten months been investigating into the phenomena of Spiritualism, and during these ten months I have seen tables cut all sorts of eccentric capers, and rapping out all kinds of answers—from the sublime to the ridiculous—but nothing has in the slightest degree been so wonderful, or so convincing as the direct-writing of last night. A little girl of my acquaintance, who is being developed as a writing-medium, came to my house in the evening to stay a day or two. We had the ordinary writing; that is, by two holding the pencil while it wrote on the slate the messages. The Spirits wanted to give or write the answers to the questions given by myself. In the course of the evening I asked—"Could the spirit write a message if the slate was held under the table by the medium?" The answer was—"I will try." Accordingly I broke a small piece of pencil, of about one-eighth of an inch long off a large piece. I then put the small piece on the slate, and the medium putting the slate under the table, and holding the slate by the finger and thumb, the table (5½ feet long by 3 feet broad) commenced to rock so much that I had to sit on it, my weight stopping the table from such demonstration of power, the medium still continued to hold the slate. The pencil commenced to jump on the slate, and then could be heard by myself, wife, and sister-in-law, distinctly writing. After the message was finished, three raps were given by the spirit to signify that the message was finished. I forgot to state that one hand of the medium held the slate, while the other hand was placed on the top of the table.

One of the messages written was the following:—In answer to a question of mine, in reference to the change called Death?—"Death is a dreadful thing; but you all must die, and after you die it is the best life you ever had. "ELIZABETH * * * * * *"

I have not signed the spirit-name in full, as the father of the little girl may not wish me to do so, and not having their consent, I will not do so without.

Yours truly,

GEO. S. CHAPPELL.

Clear Creek, Yackandandah,
August 24th, 1877.

MR. WALKER'S LECTURES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—Since writing you last I have paid a visit to New Zealand, "the beautiful Southern Isles," as Dr. Peebles says, and I by no means regret having taken the trip, for I flatter myself that I have made many warm friends, and done good to the cause of Spiritualism. My work has principally been pioneering, as I visited many places where the people had never seen or heard anything respecting our cause, excepting through the misrepresentations and abuse of its enemies. At Auckland progressive thought was fearfully backward, and excepting one or two Free-thinkers and Spiritualists, of whom the orthodox world took little notice, there was nothing to denote advancement or reform, and nothing was apparent in these domains but the eighteenth-century religions. The Press was bigoted, bitter and boisterous, stupid and slanderous, and the general public were led by its denunciations and lies. By the assistance of the Rev. S. Edgar (an unsectarian minister, whose kindness I shall never forget, and whose devotedness to what he considers truthful and right I shall ever respect) we succeeded in gaining a footing even in orthodox Auckland; and the result was, towards the close of my first stay, that I had a large committee of earnest workers, who did what they could for me in every way. Mr. J. Brabazon deserves especial credit in this respect, running the risk of losing the good opinion of the capricious public rather than act the hypocrite, or conceal his convictions. The Hon. J. McLeod, Mr. J. J. Wilkes and others I shall ever be indebted to for their kind hospitality, and generous support. I lectured for them in another course, which, if possible, was more successful than the first.

At Dunedin I had good success, and the people were more prepared for my philosophy and lectures. I find it extremely difficult to meet the preconceived notions of the people in reference to the trance. They imagine I should be next to dead, colorless, almost speechless, and unable to move a limb. These notions had, however, been removed in Dunedin by a study of the subject, and hence I had less difficulty in gaining a fair hearing. Mr. Bright has done, and is still doing, much good in this Southern City, and is greeted with large audiences every Sunday evening. The workers are many, and the Spirit circle has its work, altogether our cause is prospering. All the friends were kind to me, and did all in their power to render my visit a success.

I have now returned to Sydney, where it is my intention to stay, and deliver a course of Sunday evening lectures. Before leaving the colonies, I shall probably visit Melbourne and Queensland, if arrangements can be made.

I am yours,
In the cause,
THOMAS WALKER.

Sydney, August 17th, 1877.

DIVINISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Dear Sir,—I have just been reading the pamphlet on the above subject, advertised in your last, and on the whole consider it to be decidedly instructive. When I commenced to read it I concluded that it was a purely atheistical work, but the meanings we attach to the word God are so diversified, that I read on and was delighted. After exposing the Theological Divinities, the author commences by introducing a new word which he found in the writings of Pythagoras, and which represents a long lost idea taught by that philosopher—"*Rhythm*," the harmony of nature, upon which all the sciences are founded, and which indeed constitutes their perfections.

"In fact," says he, "the said rhythm, considered as true in the faculties of intelligence, gives us Psychology; in the ordination of thoughts, it generates Logic; in the separative quantity, it brings out Geometry; in the forces, it affords Dynamics. Considered as beautiful in the proportions, it yields Architecture; in the forms, Sculpture; in forms and colors, Painting; in sounds, Music; in thoughts and words, Eloquence and Poetry. Considered as good, it teaches all virtues (see chap. iv.), and by the virtues all truths and beauties, being applied to the happiness of life, is formed the vital science, which is called Morale."

"IV.—The rhythmical unity of the universe is a supreme school of practical morality.

"Practical morality is the virtue of the actions; nature teaches all virtues. Nature is the supreme school of practical morality.

"*Sincerity.*—All things appearing gentle are so, as are ferocious that seem ferocious. Nature tells you: Appear what you are, and never lie.

"*Justice.*—We are all born in the same way, and at a certain hour we die. Nature is just.

"*Fraternity.*—We are all of the same type. Then we are all brothers.

"*Liberality.*—You put ten seeds in the ground, you garner one hundred.

"*Temperance.*—If you exceed you will be ill. Nature enforces temperance.

"*Clemency.*—Nature, though offended, assists you to recover. She is clement.

"*Economy.*—Not two nerves or filaments are found where one is sufficient.

"*Constancy.*—You will gather excellent fruits, if you persevere in cultivating the trees.

"*Fortitude.*—The valiant is the winner. Exert your physical and moral powers and you shall win.

"*Personal Dignity.*—If you ill-treat a child, he will become indignant.

"*Solidarity.*—If you beat him his little companions weep.

"*Urbanity.*—Those bodily parts formed for low offices are rather hidden; so, if you are compelled to name some low thing, try to soften or veil it.

"Here are all the virtues, and if the rhythm of nature teaches us all virtues, what need have we of revelations and theologies? He who is inclined to practise virtue will do it without Theology; for him who is adverse to honesty, all theologies are useless. Great confidence can be placed surely on rhythmical education, but wicked people will always be in great number."

"IX.—How to establish the thus-explained sacred religion of Divinity on the earth.

"It is a noble, dutiful, and very magnificent work. All social happiness depends on it. Many are the means. Let there be constituted a committee in every town to select the more adapted ones. To publish books and newspapers, to open lecture halls, schools, colleges, universities and pensionates, especially for ladies, will be always happy ideas. The lady is the queen of humanity. The theologian has taken possession of her. We shall not win, unless we snatch the prey from his claws. Technical, mineral, and agrarian colonies for the laboring people can be well indicated, and if the economical and monetary system put forth in chap. vii. should be judged capable of a practical application, it would be certainly a source of considerable wealth. But all things of this kind must be discussed by many experienced persons, and therefore it is useless for me to speak alone.

Rationalists, Freethinkers, Lovers of Truth, Sisters and Brothers, I have confidence in you! The sacred sun of truth has dawned upon me; it fires my heart; it irradiates my mind. If you also, as I hope, are inflamed by it, our cause is won; humanity shall be renewed, happy, to be no more betrayed. Be tranquil! The Divinism is nature revealed as a goddess, and known as a friend. Nature is truth. Truth is not only inconfutable, but she is the invincible refuter of all errors. Physics killed magical arts, Divinism will destroy all Theologies. The empire of truth shall be the reign of justice, and the age of happiness. *Fiat! Fiat!*"

The writer of Divinism very injudiciously commences his pamphlet by contraverting the commonly received opinion as to the existence of God, which amongst Christians must greatly curtail its circulation. The system he teaches, however, is just such a one as must exist under a Supreme, Benevolent Governor of the Universe. If God does exist he advocates obedience to his laws. He does not inform us how law, order, or harmony came into existence, and all living organisms, without the intervention of a Supreme, Almighty, Intelligent power, which men call God

In conclusion, this subject could undoubtedly be greatly extended, but the pamphlet contains much valuable and original information for the small sum of sixpence.

I am, Sir, &c.
TRUTH SEEKER.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The present issue commences the eighth year of the publication of the *Harbinger of Light*. We tender our thanks to a number of subscribers to this journal who have paid up their subscriptions to date, and, in some instances, in advance. Their thoughtfulness in this matter has been of assistance to us in enabling us to pay the printer his due; but we regret, at the same time, to say that a very large number of subscribers have allowed their subscriptions to fall one or more years in arrear, and when they do remit, only pay their subscriptions up to date, taking on each occasion twelve months' credit for their paper. We beg to inform such that we are not capitalists—a fact which, in some measure, we regret, as we see so many good uses to which money could be applied if we had it; but even were we better off in this respect than we are, it would not justify them taking this extended credit, and their doing so cripples our efforts to diffuse spiritual literature and information. The subscription is payable in advance, and we make an allowance of one shilling per annum as an inducement to annual subscribers. We hereby give notice that from this date the allowance will only be made when the subscription is paid within **six months of the commencement of each volume**. Subscribers allowing their subscriptions to go farther than this in arrear will be charged sixpence per copy, exclusive of postage. Those subscribers who owe for last volume will receive their papers in a **Green Wrapper**, and we trust this will be a sufficient reminder to induce them to send us the two years subscription without a special application for same. Those who owe for more than the past year will please notice the **Yellow Wrapper**, in which their paper is enveloped. They are requested not to consider so much the spiritual significence of the color as the material or marine one—viz., quarantine, into which we shall have to put their paper until their account on our books is in a healthier state. We have carried on this paper through many difficulties for seven years, and never asked pecuniary aid. If we could get our due for every paper issued it would just pay its way, but as it is we give our time and labor, and are money out of pocket. It is a disgrace to the many who call themselves Spiritualists that it should be so, and we hope the result of this appeal will show that it is nothing worse than thoughtlessness which has prevented us receiving our dues earlier.

OUTLINES OF SPIRITUALISM.

By Frederic Bond.

No. VIII.—Mediumship.

—o—

" The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the voice I hear;
He but perceives what is, while unto me
All that has been is visible and clear.
* * * * *

" The Spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.
* * * * *

" And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud
Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
Into the realm of mystery and night,—

" So from the world of spirits there descends
A bridge of light, connecting it with this,
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss."

To the long list of imposters who have infested this earth from time to time—from the traditional Cagliostro, who offered to bestow everlasting youth upon all whose resources would permit of their purchasing the boon, down to the unfortunate lunatic who essayed a few months ago to enter Windsor Castle, asserting his claim to be recognised as the King of England, and denouncing her Majesty, Queen Victoria, as a usurper—anti-Spiritualists have added the large class of mediums. To merely breathe the word " medium" in the ears of these anti-Spiritualists is to evoke a torrent of invective which can seldom be stopped till it has expended the full force of its fury. To hint one's belief in modern mediumship is to be considered *non compos mentis*. To declare one's self to be a medium is to court obloquy and ostracism. And this state of things will continue till mediums and mediumship are alike better understood and appreciated. As an instance of the bitter persecution of which mediums are sometimes the victims, one has simply to cast his memory back to the *cause celèbre*, Professor Lankester v. Dr. Slade—a trial which posterity will regard as an evidence of the vile oppression that is wrought upon all who venture to claim freedom of speech and action in the present age, and one which, at the same time, will serve as an imperishable warning to mediums to be careful in future as to whom they admit to their *séances*. But we know that the exponents of all great truths have been remorselessly persecuted when such truths are first publicly advocated. It is therefore no matter of surprise that mediums should be despised and maltreated as they are. Indeed, this persecution ought rather to be accepted as a proof of the truth of Spiritualism; for were the case otherwise it would inevitably lead to the conclusion that the work accomplished by mediums is not of so much importance as to merit its suppression.

It has been asked—Who are mediums? What is mediumship? To these questions it will be my endeavor to give a befitting reply. Those who are familiar with the phenomena of mesmerism will be aware of the fact that a kind of magnetic or nerve aura emanates from the bodies of all persons. This aura, which is supposed by many to be the connecting link between mind and matter, is, I need hardly remark, invisible to the ordinary eyesight, but its presence is distinctly visible to clairvoyants. " Aura" simply means a subtile vapour or exhalation arising from the body; and it is used by spirit-intelligences as a means of communicating with the denizens of this world, it being the only common ground between them and us. But although this emanation is not peculiar to any class of persons, yet it is only a certain kind of it that is serviceable for spirit-manifestations. A medium, then, is one who gives off this particular kind of aura; and it may be inferred from this that mediums, as a class, are exceedingly sensitive to external influences. The actual existence of this magnetic aura is now doubted by none; the evidence in favour of it is so overwhelming. It has been said, indeed, that "possibly we have in this nerve aura a glimmering of those intense likes and dislikes we feel for certain persons, irrespective of any known reason;" and the postulate is by no means unlikely. The phenomena of mesmerism—whose truth is not disputed now a-days by anyone who has fully investigated the subject—are analogous to those of Spiritualism, the same magnetic aura just described being taken advantage of both by the human and spirit mesmerist. " Mesmerism," say the spirit-guides of Mr. Morse, a celebrated English medium, " is the spirit of one man controlling the bodily organs and external mind of another. Remove the operator from his house of clay, and his spirit-power will still operate in the same way. The same force—namely, will-power—is used in both instances, and the same result follows."

In a former paper* I referred at length to the various phases which spirit mediumship assumes. The manner in which spirits acquire control over the minds and bodies of mediums is by exercising their will-power, exactly similar to the mode by which the electro-biologist gains ascendance over the mental and physical organs of his subject. But it must not be supposed that *all* spirits are able to control mediums. Far from it. Just as there are comparatively few really successful mesmerists upon earth, so are there comparatively few spirits who can acquire control over human subjects without repeated efforts. Neither must it be supposed that mediums are fully developed all at once. True, I have frequently known mediumistic persons to be " controlled," as Spiritualists say, at the first sitting; but, as a rule, it requires constant attendance at the spirit-circle in order to develop properly as a medium, just in the same way as it requires constant practice on the pianoforte in order to cultivate a musical *penchant*.

The principal reasons of the fact that many *bonâ-fide* investigators become disheartened almost at the threshold of their experiments is that they receive so many unreliable communications. These untruthful messages, indeed, have very often been so dispiriting as to induce investigators to discontinue their experiments. But it must be borne in mind that the channel through which spirit communications are conveyed is not always perfect; consequently the messages will be imperfect. All who are acquainted with the working of the Press will know that the reliability of an account of a scientific lecture, an agricultural show, or a political address, wholly depends on the knowledge of these subjects which the reporter possesses. Let a reporter's stenographic abilities be ever so extraordinary, yet some grave inaccuracies are certain to creep into his report of a lecture on protoplasm, for instance, unless he is acquainted more or less with that subject. And so it is in the case of mediums, and the messages they bear to us from the world of spirits. So long as the gift of mediumship is *in embryo*, so long will the spirit-message be defective and unsatisfactory. This fact will serve as a guide to investigators not to attach too much credence to the statements and professions of spirits, but to " try the spirits."

On the whole, I cannot say that I am in favour of mediums entertaining the outside public with a display of their mediumistic gifts for money much in the same way as a conjuror performs marvellous feats in a Hall of Mystery, to which the admission is five shillings. Of course mediums have a right to subsist as well as other persons—ministers of the Gospel for instance; and, moreover, many sceptics have been convinced of the truth of Spiritual phenomena through witnessing the public *séances* of Dr. Slade, Messrs. Herne and Williams, and others. Still, at the same time, people are apt to regard the manifestations at a public circle with the greatest incredulity and suspicion; and after such damnifying exposures as Dr. Monck's seems to have been, it would appear that they are in some degree justified in adopting this view. For my own part, I fear that some professional mediums—and genuine ones, too—are prone to produce the manifestations themselves when the power is exhausted, or the conditions are not favourable; and, of course, this is neither satisfactory to the public, nor beneficial to the cause of Spiritualism. By far the greatest amount of good can be accomplished

* No. III.—Historical and Traditional Testimony.

in the private circle, where the medium is not tempted to be dishonest, so as not to send the sitters away dissatisfied. In such a circle, mediums can win converts whose support will be both sincere and valuable. It is to them, then, that we should extend our aid and sympathy—as, indeed, we should to all mediums, whether professional or otherwise—so as to encourage them in the noble work they are destined to accomplish; to succour them in their reverses, to relieve them in their misfortunes, to encourage them in their ambitions, and to rejoice with them in their successes.

DECEASE OF ROBERT DALE OWEN.

FROM THE BANNER OF LIGHT, JUNE 30TH.

ON Sunday morning, the 24th inst, our old friend and valued co-worker passed to the reward which surely awaited him (as it does all who labor for the advancement of every phase of truth on earth) in the land of souls.

Mr. Owen was in character singularly simple and straightforward, his tastes refined, and he enjoyed the esteem and friendship of a large number of men prominent in literature and public life, outside of as well as within the ranks of the spiritual believers. He was a man of unusually vigorous intellect, honest beyond all question, and animated by a noble desire to benefit the human race and promote sound principles.

Robert Dale was born at Glasgow, Scotland, November 7th, 1801, and spent his early years at New Lanark, under the care of a private teacher. He subsequently studied for three years at Hofwyl, in Switzerland, and in 1823 came to this country with his father. He lived several years at New Harmony, Indiana, where his father was engaged in an effort to build up a community in accord with his theories, but from 1828 to 1831 was in New York, conducting a weekly paper called *The Free Enquirer*, in partnership with Miss Frances Wright. He returned to New Harmony in 1832, after his marriage with Mary Jane Robinson, daughter of Samuel Robinson, a prominent merchant of New York.

Mr. Owen, after settling at New Harmony, had considerable experience in public life. He served in the Indiana Legislature from 1835 to 1838, and in Congress from 1845 to 1847. He introduced the bill organising the Smithsonian Institution, and in 1846 became one of its regents and chairman of its Building Committee. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention in Indiana in 1850, and Chairman of its Revision Committee, and both in the Convention and Legislature endeavored to secure the adoption of measures granting independent rights of property to women. He was appointed Chargé d'Affaires at Naples in 1853, and Minister in 1855, and remained there until 1858. For the last few years Mr. Owen was engaged mostly in literary work.

His investigations in Spiritualism began some twenty years ago or more, and he became a devout believer in its philosophy and phenomena, passing out of the form in the full assurance of its truth. His first important work on the subject was, "Footfalls on the Boundaries of Another World," published in 1860, and in 1872 appeared "The Debateable Land Between This World and the Next." In these two books an account is given of his studies and observations with mediums, and many marvellous experiences are related.

He published several books prior to 1860, including a historical drama, entitled "Pocahontas," and "Hints on Public Architecture," and in 1870 appeared a novel under the title, "Beyond the Breakers." Previous to his illness in 1875 he was engaged on an autobiography, portions of which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly. Mr. Owen devoted much thought to social and philosophical questions, and was a vigorous writer and attractive speaker.

Within a few years he again entered the marriage state, residing with the lady who linked her fortunes with his, at Lake George, N.Y., up to the time of his decease. The army of progress on earth has lost the material presence of a valiant soldier, but the workers in the sphere of causation have, in his transition, won a powerful recruit.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

OPENING OF THE READING-ROOM.

THE new Reading-room of the above association, at 84 Russell-street, was formally opened by the Vice-President, Mr. H. Brotherton, on Tuesday evening, August 7th. There was a large attendance of members, and after a few remarks from the chairman, in which he expressed his opinion that the object of those concerned in the movement was to diffuse as much truth as possible, the Librarian was requested to read the list of papers, magazines, and books at present available in the reading-room. Before doing so, Mr. Terry expressed his gratification at the accomplishment of this first object of the new association, and at the interest shown by the number there present. The Reading-room would be an advantage, not only to members personally, but more particularly to their friends and acquaintances. Where a desire was expressed by any of their friends to know something more about Spiritualism they could refer them to the room, where from the papers, periodicals and books, they would be able to get sufficient information to encourage them to investigate further. Members would be provided with tickets for the purpose which they could issue, and which would be available for a week. He then read the following list of papers and books in the room:—

Banner of Light, Spiritual Scientist, Spiritualist, Medium—weekly

Human Nature, London Spiritual Magazine, American Spiritual Magazine, The Shaker, Little Boquet—monthly.

Arcana of Spiritualism; Tuttle.

Debateable Land; R. D. Owen.

Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World; Owen.

Letters on Spiritualism; Edmonds.

Modern American Spiritualism; E. H. Britten.

Phenomena of Spiritualism; Crookes.

Miracles of Modern Spiritualism; Wallace.

Where are the Dead? or, Spiritualism Explained.

Death and the After Life; Davis.

DONATIONS.

England and Islam; Maitland.

Library of Mesmerism.

Holy Truth; H. J. Browne.

Tracts on Spiritualism, and Wallace's Defence, in 1 vol.

Banner of Light, from April 1st, 1876, to June 8th, 1877.

"Spiritualist," from March 10th, 1876, to May 25th, 1877.

One bound vol. (38) Banner of Light.

20 numbers Herald of Progress.

Mystery of Edwin Drood, complete.

Great Harmonia, Vol. I.

Scepticism and Spiritualism.

Book on Mediums.

Cash, One Pound.

The committee had also ordered the following papers:—

Religio Philosophical Journal.

Voice of Angels.

Hull's Crucible.

General satisfaction was expressed at the provision made for readers which, with expected donations, were deemed ample for present requirements; also with the suitableness of the room which is lofty and well-lit. On the walls are portraits of Dr. J. M. Peebles, A. J. Davis, and Katie King,—Ten Spiritual Commandments and Rules of Right, and a photograph of direct spirit-writing, received at Sandhurst. There is also a volume of some of the earliest spirit teachings received in Victoria, lent by Mr. Terry. The room will be open daily from 10 to 5 and 7 to 10, p.m.; Sundays, 2 to 5, and 7 to 10.

Several other books have since been donated.

THE *Banner of Light* of June 23rd contains an article by Professor J. R. Buchanan on "Matter and Spirit," their true relations, &c., examined from a scientific point of view, which we purpose reproducing in our next issue.

THE REV. DR. MOORHOUSE ON THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES.

Before me is a report of a lecture delivered by the above-named reverend gentleman at St. Paul's Church, on the Messianic Prophecies, the text chosen by him being Luke iv. 21.

The Bishop "wished to lay before his hearers—First, the fact that our Lord claimed to be that Divine king, and priest, and prophet," called the "Messiah" in the Old Testament; and in evidence thereof he quoted the words said to be spoken by Jesus to the Samaritan woman, to whom he answered—"I that speak to you am He, "meaning the Messiah."

To this evidence I decidedly object, as many statements contained in John's gospel are not only *incompatible with*, but *contradictory to others* contained in the first three gospels, both of which cannot be true. For example, we are informed in the Gospel "according to" (not by) Matthew, that Jesus said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and in the 10th chapter we are informed that he said unto his Disciples, "Go not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." While we read in John's Gospel that "God so LOVED THE WORLD that he gave his only begotten son that WHOMSOEVER BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In short, that Jesus was sent to both Jews and Gentiles.

Observe also, according to the Gospel of John: Jesus on leaving the Baptist was not immediately driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil forty days; but proceeded at once into *Gallilee of the Gentiles*, and was present at a marriage feast, and instead of fasting there, turned the water into wine! through which, we are informed, "his disciples believed upon him," doubtless that *he was the Christ*. He is represented as proceeding next *into Samaria*, where he preached to the inhabitants of one of the cities, declaring himself to be *the promised Messiah*, near one of their public wells. At their solicitation he abode two days with them, and we are informed that "many of the Samaritans believed on him." PETER is represented as having accompanied him. That must have occurred before his disciples were sent forth by him to preach the Gospel. How then can we reconcile the account given by John with that of Mathew before referred to? If Mathew's statements are correct, such conduct on the part of Jesus was most inconsistent!

The reverend gentleman also referred to Peter's reply. When asked by Jesus, "Whom say you that I am?"—his reply was "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This question, along with the reply said to have been made by Jesus, for several reasons appears to me to be a mere interpretation by designing priestcraft for the assumption of authority. Some of these reasons only, for want of space, can I here give. First, because the statement said to be made by Jesus is at variance with the account given us by John concerning Peter. His words were, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven!"—while according to John's Gospel, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, found him "his own flesh and blood," and said to him, "We have found the Messiah which is, being interpreted, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus." We have already shown that Peter was with Jesus when he turned the water into wine, and through that miracle had "believed in him." He was also at the City of Samaria with Jesus when he preached to the Samaritans, informing them that he was the Messiah, where we are informed "many of them believed." It therefore seems extraordinary that Jesus should use such language and apparent astonishment at his profession. In none of the first three gospels does Jesus, either in his precepts or parables, teach the necessity of an intercession, or of an atonement, or of the abrogation of the Jewish law, or teach the Jews that he was their Messiah.

Nothing more clearly shows how far Christians have departed from his instructions than the persistent application of the term Christ to his name, notwithstanding his commands to the contrary, except it be *that they cannot preach their gospel without disobeying his injunction* to "tell no man that he is the Christ." In short the gospel, as taught by John and Paul, is simply a proclamation of that forbidden fact. Paul said he "was determined not to know anything save Jesus CHRIST and him crucified." He should have left out the word "Jesus," whose precepts, parables, and gospel he rarely if ever refers to; in short HE, and not *Jesus has laid the foundation of* CHRISTIANITY, as he himself correctly teaches. As a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, "for other foundation can no man lay than is laid which is Jesus CHRIST." "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which you have received, let him be accursed—(Gal. i., 8-9.) Paul "preached Christ," *Jesus did not*, and he forbade the twelve to do so—"tell no man that he was the Christ" was a command given to them by Jesus, and I daresay they did not much fear Paul's curses, neither do we.

I am, Sir, &c,

R.

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUAL RELIGION.

Various widely differing creeds lay claim to the exclusive possession of religious truth received by infallible inspiration. Each proffers an explanation of the origin and government of the visible universe, by an invisible power or powers, also defined and located, at the same time dictating a course of action by which the future benefit of the obedient believer will be, according to their scheme, assured. Disregarding the fact that the veracity of one is necessarily destructive of that of all others, we may, considering them as a whole, determine the value of the general features common to all, and upon which all alike rest. As to their statements in reference to the planet, such sciences as Geology and Paleontology must decide, and in our estimation of the less appreciable, because avowedly immaterial spheres, we shall be largely swayed by the accuracy discovered in this division. If in a barbarous age the results of centuries of research were fore-reached by their records, an acknowledgment of superhuman interposition would be at least partially justifiable, while inaccuracy in those questions we are now enabled to solve, must altogether vitiate their importance, and undermine our confidence in abstract relations. Where science is silent their statements must be accepted in proportion to their harmony with our accumulated experiences as compared by reason. Where they clash, the mere doctrine must yield, and in all cases, unless substantiated by positive evidence, can obtain only a place among probable or possible contingencies.

Whatever conclusions may be still disputed, the discrepancies between the several dicta of so-called religions and ascertained scientific truth concerning the origin and development of the present condition of our earth are so many, and so glaring, that the professedly faultless accounts may be, without exception, at once and for ever relegated to the region of forgotten fables. The Creation, according to the Christian Genesis, is so palpable an invention, so absurd in its texture, and so childish in its method, as to merit from kindness the oblivion it is fast descending to. The Koran on this point is equally trivial, and like all the attempts of bigotry to theorise upon realities, has but to be compared with the facts to sink into the insignificance of contemptible error. This salutary discipline prepares us for the long catalogue of after-fictions with which the sects have burdened us, and we are justified in dismissing the hideous hobgoblins heaped upon the unseen to the same limbo already crowded with their drivelling falsehoods as to material actualities. Spiritual Science, pursuing them to their last retreat, tears down their libels one by one, until naked and trembling the old giant of orthodoxy stands revealed in its light as the veritable father of lies. Both in this and the after-life we can rest only in positive knowledge, for faith in the dogmas of unreasoning fanatics has proved a fearful enemy to progress in the past. On all sides we have been deceived, and then deserted by the will-o'-the-wisp belief, which the same in no two decades or persons is annihilated by the coming of Science, now judging alike the quick and the dead. Star-eyed piercing past and future, enshrined in glory upon the minds of educated men, she delivers us from the

follies of superstitious imbecility to the calm potency and rest of certitude. Henceforth it is to her priests that we shall look for revelation, and in her temple that we shall worship truth. Until she speaks we shall remain silent, that only which she endorses shall we accept, and *when* her cautious ministers discover Trinities upon white thrones, with crowns, and harps, and hells, we shall believe, but *not till then.*

The remaining demand of the creeds is that of obedience in action. In the stumbling stages of savageism each set forth to those disobeying its mandates the fearful consequences incurred. By plentiful parade of perdition it enforced a rude morality, as imperfect and despotic as the faith we now know to be most fallible. The latest dispensation discloses to us no punishment attached in the after life to any rejection of their doctrines, which on the contrary are cast aside by the expanding intelligence, and are even here capable of exposure in manifold misstatements as to both natural and spiritual things. The ethics they inculcated were but little less incomplete, sometimes silent, often unjust. Their errors, robbed of the theatrical properties by which they became formidable to the fearful, are rationally explained. The incentives to goodness outside of them are no less, while the standard by which the resulting moral actions are made beneficial, is raised and purified. The monitor is within and not without. Conscience, cultivated by experience, has built up a Moral Science, in which duty is delineated without artifice or pretence, and unclogged by superstition. The creeds are not so much overthrown as ousted. Their "occupation's gone." Their code of life superseded, their means of intimidation destroyed, and their imbecilities of assumption scattered to the winds. What they have advanced as truth, perfect and complete, is proved to contain so many errors, and has been so much modified and diminished by more accurate additions to our knowledge as to be but of infinitesimal importance. What they put forward as absolutely right is often but partially so, while altogether it is crude and confined in its operations, forming but the commencement of a science which, without its delusive accompaniments, includes and far exceeds the modicum of justice contained therein. As awe-stricken peasants bowing to the meteors fallen on their fields, what they ignorantly worshipped Science has declared unto them, and lifting these masses that so long lay undigested on the fruitfulness of intelligence, has beaten them into ploughshares, now opening up the soil, and thus enabling the dews of heaven to increase its natural fertility. Dogma is dead. Over its grave and from its ashes spring the flowers freely. The individual soul stands erect in native majesty, its feet firm on the stand of fact, and its head, rising above the level of life, bathed in the light of wisdom.

Is Religion dead, then? Is it laid away with the dreams of the darkness—and has the true trinity usurped its empty throne? In the cosmos, and in conduct, the stores of Science are gathered by Philosophy, which stretches as far as intelligence can penetrate. The emotions find their voice in act. What room is left then for an entity styled religion? Is it not superfluous? Has it any meaning, use or power? The attribute religious, as applied to a person, has certainly a definite significance apart from such other qualifications as intellectual or artistic. A certain tone running through any or all faculties of the mind, it makes its presence powerfully felt as an ingredient of character. Analysing this it will be discovered to arise primarily from the love feeling; not that which relates to sense or sex, but a power more general, and a more impersonal affection. Here phrenology may assist us. The perceptions upon which Science is founded lie at the base of the brain, on the level of the eye, and belong, together with the coarser attractions about the ears to the lower grades of the animal kingdom. The organs of comparison and those of the more unselfish sentiments, rise upon these occupying the forehead region, while the crown of the head contains the means of expression accorded to Veneration, Conscientiousness, and Benevolence. The second stage, only the germ of which is found in any other form of life than man, is the domain of Philosophy, over this, the third Religion is enthroned supreme. Dividing these thus arbitrarily for convenience of view, we find that the moral occupy the larger portion of the religious plane, while they would be properly adjusted with the philosophic. These coronal faculties are not in any sense intellectual, and do not add in any measure to the understanding. If we separate therefore moral and intellectual from them, there remain such as Veneration, Spirituality and Hope, or better Faith, which must constitute the essentials of religious feeling. The indebtedness of Veneration to Love is easily apparent, and indeed it may be appropriately defined as the love of the superior; reverence and admiration arising naturally from a clear-sighted soul, as incense of worship to the "Divinity which shapes our end, rough-hew them how we will." Spirituality implies that the higher affections have so overcome the lower as to render the things of earth valueless when compared with their spiritual essence attained by aspiration. It is the purity of love which pervades the whole being with a pure aroma of richness denied to the more physically attracted. Faith and hope are to be ranked in the same category. Faith springs from powerful as distinguished from pure love. "Perfect love casteth out fear," because it is then faithful. The deeper and wider the love, the profounder and holier the trust with which we encounter the seeming ills of life, and pass through its trials in the furnaces of temptation and regret.

It would unduly prolong this portion of the argument to display fully the phrenological aspects of Religion. The merest indication of its direction must suffice. Imitation, a much misunderstood agency of good, better styled Idealism, is closely linked to active benevolence, and represents our desire to realise in ourselves the good we recognise around us. The part it plays in moral religion is therefore a most important one. Marvellousness, still more infelicitously named, is an appenage of veneration which it follows in a wider and less exalted field; containing the capacity for apprehending the greatest conceptions and the most profound mysteries it is a prominent feature in the intellectually religious domain. Together these form the foundation of the superior three, whose operations they extend and multiply, while connecting them also with the specially ethical and rational powers. They are, however, dependent upon them, when mutually acting upon each other, and blending in sympathetic union, giving forth the delicate melody of Religion. With any deficiency of these it must be impaired—if one be wanting the chain is broken, and earth and heaven are more or less disunited in a non-religious mind.

But though by this dissection we arrive at the root of Religion, yet it is to be noticed that starting from that height, like a tiny stream gushing from a mountain-side, it flows downward through other channels, and accordingly as the philosophic and scientific bases are developed becomes manifest in its entirety. The one power more than any other assisting the primary trinity is that of Ideality, than which a nobler does not pertain to the human intelligence. It renders the conception of the object of religion worthy or unworthy according to its range, and by close relation to the philosophic judgment, goes far to influence the whole body of the belief. The intimate connection between the religious and moral faculties already referred to has caused the life to become the criterion of the sincerity of the creed—and justly for another reason also—the religious nature is the one appertaining to humanity alone. It is the latest in development, whether in a people or an individual, as it was with the race as a whole. It marks the completion of nature's labors, and should exist with the perfection of all the other divisions of the individual. It is not thoroughly expressed except in the complete man, and even more than the other sections of the brain is dependent upon many faculties for support—Veneration and Benevolence form the two pillars upon which it rests. The first, assisted by Marvellousness and Ideality, gives the intellectual side; the second from Idealization and Spirituality, leads us to the moral as in Conscientiousness. Hope or Faith arbitrates between them, rising in an arch from both. The most complex of our combinations, it is the literal crown of intelligence; and springing from the deepest fountains of the soul, soars far above the

loftiest of its former utterances. It not only soars above but cements those beneath it. More than cementing, it moulds—more than moulding, it suffuses—more than suffusing, it includes them. Love is the life of man, and Religion as its highest manifestation includes all below it. The spire and pinnacle of the intellect, it is reared the last and rises the highest into the glorious light of heaven. It diffuses itself throughout the whole sphere of mortal activity, and to Science and Philosophy gives their final requirement; for without it they are crownless in their greatest victories. They bring us Truth, but Religion teaches us how to regard and interpret it, thus revealing higher and deeper arcana. They relate to man as an instrument of being; but religion discovers him as an immortal soul, however puny and slight, recognising in him the offspring of the Infinite Father. They tend to lead their votaries to pride, to arrogance, and to egotism; but religion makes the greatest humble, while it places the humble higher on the stage of existence than they their greatest.

It is not necessary for a religious man to believe in any creed; it is not asked of him to do more than his conscience dictates. He may deny all things except Goodness, Truth and Beauty; defy all laws, except those of his own Soul, and refuse allegiance to everything but Nature. The name in which he worships is nothing, if in his heart he be sincere and tender. He shall not know himself of the company of angels, but if his life merit it, he is and will continue so to be. Loftiness and gentleness, majesty and meekness, faith to the highest ideal, charity to all mankind, these make a man religious, and without them none can wear the honor. Ages of lip-homage and servility cannot gain it, so much as a day spent in well-doing; all the Churches in Christendom are powerless to obtain it, unless each man for himself proves his claim, and wins his spurs by knightly devotion to the right. The selfish struggle for heaven and flight from hell are not contained in it. The doctrine of the pulpit is exactly the reverse of truth. If a man do good to save his own soul by another's name, at command, that deed shall *not* benefit; but if done for the love of mankind or of virtue, then it shall abundantly bless him. The scramble for salvation is a sorry sight to the religious disposition, and marks a class as utterly irreligious as the frigid and heartless devotee to the deities of gold or science, or the foul profanity of him who seeks only the satisfaction of sense. The new commandment given unto us is the beginning of all religion—"Love one another"—and again—"Love the spirit of good, and thy neighbor," whose name enfolds all living things. Religion is the expression of love in life; not passional desire, but of the affinity of the soul for all that is best and truest.

It manifests itself in various planes—on the Moral, when it is earnest and active in providing against the physical destitution and suffering of its fellows—on the Intellectual, when it infuses the holy spirit of truth-seeking into the refined and cultivated perspicuity which possessing proclaims it freely—upon the Artistic, when indeed it rises through the æsthetic gateways of inspiration, to the grandest and sweetest of all these forms of the one Divine force which preceded the revelations of the present day. Previously, it was but to a very few isolated seers that any satisfactory view of the inner world, or indeed of the operation of its powers or laws in any direction was granted; now, for the first time in history, a Spiritual Religion is possible of attainment by all in whom any germ of genuine devotion exists, or can be implanted. Without the impulse of exceptional powers and experiences the sacred intuitions can be awakened by the expanse of Spiritual Being thrown open to our gaze. The vivid and enduring impressions sealed upon us by beneficent guardians, together with the profuse evidence afforded by their existence to the reason, cannot but kindle in all to whom any spark of religious feeling has been vouchsafed, the reverential spirituality and faith arising from a contemplation of the interior universe. We no longer receive our creed on trust, at second hand, or by deputy; it comes home to the individual spirit, and flows therein direct from the fountains of nature. We have no need to refer to God's writing in the past, or to his Word as it came to ancient prophets, it is audible still in the sanctuaries of aspiration, it echoes throughout the living frame of humanity, in constant example directing us, and pronouncing judgment on the destiny of all peoples. The Deity has withdrawn the veil of mystery and distance which hung between the features of his protecting power, and the adoring fearfulness of his trembling creatures. The human mind has lifted drooping eyes, and arisen from failing knees to worship erect in the light of understanding; recognising the dignity of the Father best displayed in that of his children, rendering homage in heart and not in hypocrisy, knowing that the noblest worship is that which seeks to comprehend the less and less incomprehensible; by such an appreciation of its qualities, learning to love them more and more. Child-love is ignorant, man's love discriminating, more deep, more lasting. The ancient religions confined the adoration that it might not trench upon the prerogatives of their master, and as relying little, forbade the search for much. They "had not faith enough to dare to doubt." The new religion is more faithful, because it better realises the omnipotence of its progenitor, and conscious of inexhaustible sympathy, dares do all things that may more reveal to it the power they have no dread of ever drinking dry. Formerly the foe it is now the friend of science and philosophy, tolerance and truth are its aim, life its means, love its motive, the soul its priest, law its oracle, nature its shrine.

Like the old and temporary preparation it has two parts—the one of Belief, the other of Action. In the first it outsoars philosophy which it supplements instead of opposing, reading between the lines of scientific discovery the meaning of the creative soul. Out of the ocean of the emotions it brings up pearls of sublime and magnificent worth. To read the writing one must read the writer too. No merely intellectual grasp of realities can decipher them thoroughly, for they prove the products of a dual nature, even as we are thought and feeling, having its correspondents to these. We reach in Religion the central principle, the essential truth, and by it not only contain and retain the science and philosophy of being, but penetrate to the very core of their existence, making thus the twofold factions one. Tending towards a system since the very beginning of history, religion when it reared it, apart from its co-mates, on the purely mental plane, was following a righteous and far-seeing attraction in a mistaken and short-sighted manner. The Churches are symbols of this, as are their devotees who, susceptible to spiritual guidance, translate it into material actions, widely astray from right. The system of religion rises over and upon science and philosopy. It denies nothing of their established verities, but brightens and beautifies them, makes them warm and loving, more human, more divine.

But its immediate manifestation is in the life: A truly religious man or woman is marked off from all the masses with whom, far from desiring such a separation, they seek to blend; not by sinking themselves but by raising others. They are anomalies in a sense, for our present stage of development is far below them. What we are, they cannot by any possibility be. No part is open to them in a social scheme, which demands from all who move in it a courtly callousness of feeling, a polished blindness of intuition; a subservience to sense, to accursed custom, unnatural habits, and deleterious associations. Spiritual Religion only exists in a spiritual life. A spiritual life is incompatible with all the gifts and honors, and occupations of this degraded day. It is utterly incompatible with wealth, for the barest competence alone must suffice for one who is purely just, or sensitive to the desolations around him. It is incompatible with anything that is termed success, for nothing that can be offered to such a soul can be measured with the needs he must minister to, unrewarded and maligned. It is incompatible with any power belonging to position, or any personal influence except as an inspiration towards good. It is too far removed from the masses to be in anything understood by them. It is impossible for them to rise to these heights, and below it they are afflicted by a dim perception of their own darkness, and an erronous desire to lower him to their own level It is incompatible with anything which they will include

under the word enjoyment, for no other can exist for such a soul except the delight of self-sacrifice, of truth attained, or of good achieved. It is indeed almost incompatible with life or faith in this age. Let us be charitable and accept this solution of the dawning knowledge, that we can lay claim to no such. Yet even as church and creed, pain and grief have their beneficent bearings, so our grossness, selfishness, and ignorance have their office, though it be but a Helot's, and by our enormity of disgrace, we cause the higher to shrink from anything that could connect them with such infamy. We must accept the partial gleams of faith, and walking as near to the ideal as weakness will permit, remember that in the degree that we are religious, in that proportion we are less unworthy. The wider our creed, and the more and deeper truth it contains the better. The purer the life the more entire its renunciation, the more sincere its devotion, the more humble, patient, and charitable in its activity, the closer we are drawn to the angelic exemplars above us, and to the spiritual power which is their light, and crown, and teaching evermore. To them their "sweet religion" is no "rhapsody of words," but is in its Divine absorption the presence, emblem, and perfection of the Absolute of Love.

ASPYRAL.

WALKER INTERVIEWED.

As Mr. Thomas Walker will probably visit Melbourne before leaving the colonies, the following account of his career, given by himself, may be of interest to our readeis. We think the statement that Dr. Peebles requested Walker to accompany him to Australia is a mistake, as the Doctor assured us that Mr. W. was simply a fellow traveller, and not associated with him, except in the fact that they were engaged in the same cause. We omit (to save space) an unimportant portion of the narrative, relating to Mr. W.'s travels in search of work in America:—

A member of our staff called upon Mr. Thomas Walker a few days since for the purpose of obtaining some particulars as to his early life, and his career as a trance lecturer. Mr. Walker stated that he was born in Altham, a village in Lancashire, England, on the 5th February, 1858. His father, Mr. Thomas Walker, who was then a journeyman miller, soon afterwards removed to Preston. When Thomas was three years old his father went to Leyland, where he rented Crawshaw Mill, and worked it in connection with a small farm. Thomas, from the time he was seven years of age until he was thirteen, worked at the mill and on the farm. When recovering from an attack of scarlet fever, which he had at the age of thirteen, he conversed with spirits, and held theological discussions with his father, who at that time was a strict member of the Church of England. His uncle, Mr. Thomas Eccles, book-keeper of the Gas Works, Glover's Court, Preston, who was then investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism, hearing of the extraordinary manner in which his nephew spoke when in the somnambulic state, went down to Leyland when Thomas had recovered, and held a sitting. The result was that his uncle took him to his house in Preston, where he remained two years and a half, attending St. Thomas School, Lancaster road. Up to the time he left his father's he had had no schooling, and could scarcely read. After attending school for two years and a half he could parse a little, and do sums in interest. At the first seance which he attended in his uncle's house, he went into a trance, and lectured. The circle, which was regularly held for sometime afterwards, was attended by Mr. Stone, Mr. Tomlin, and Dr. Holmes, gentlemen of standing in Preston. When 15 years of age he wrote, when in the trance, a reply to an attack on Spiritualism, which was published, and was considered a very extraordinary production for a lad of his age. Some accounts of his lectures in private having reached the public, through the Press, he was invited to lecture at Liverpool, and delivered his first public discourse at the Islington Assembly Room. He afterwards appeared in public at Preston. Not having been brought up to any trade, and finding it difficult to obtain employment in Preston, he soon afterwards, with the consent of his parents, when 16 years of age, sailed for Canada. * * * * From Montreal he went to Toledo, Ohio, where he became acquainted with a Mrs. David, a test medium, who said some friends of hers at Whitehouse, a village 18 miles off, wished her to invite him to lecture there. He went and lectured three nights. He then went from village to village, in the back woods, lecturing to small audiences, until he reached Adrian, where he lectured for a week, and underwent an examination by the Professors of the Adiian Methodist College, who expressed their astonishment at the manner in which he acquitted himself. The *Adrian Times* stated that the Professors were confounded. He now went by the name of "the Boy Lecturer." At Wauseon he debated the following question in public, on the 7th and 8th of June, 1876, with Professor J. M'Queen :—"Resolved—That departed human spirits do communicate with mortals here," and came off victorious. At Merenci, he met with a doctor, who advised him to attend the Michigan State Spiritualists' Convention at Sturgess. He accordingly went, and listened to the speakers on the first day. Being, however, shabbily dressed, and having the appearance of a tramp, the Lecture Committee refused him a hearing. He then went to Mr. Peebles on the platform, and said, "Mr. Peebles, I am a trance-speaker." Mr. Peebles' only reply was, "Are you?" Senator Wait informed the speakers where they could find entertainment, and said he could accommodate a few at his house. Walker went to Mr. Wait's, and there he found Mr. Peebles, who invited him to his room, where he went into a trance. After an interview with Walker's controls, Mr. Peebles dressed him up in a new suit, and brought him forward next day as a speaker. Stewart addressed the audience, through Walker' on the Life of Plato, and Knowles delivered an oration on the following day. These lectures made a profound impression, and Walker was spoken of very highly in the papers. He received offers of engagements from various quarters, but he consented, at Mr. Peebles' request, to accompany him on a journey round the world. They travelled overland to San Francisco, meeting at two or three places on the route. Walker lectured for some time at Salt Lake City, Sacramento, and San Francisco. At the latter place the Spiritualists passed a resolution to the effect that he was the best trance-speaker they had ever heard, and made him a presentation. Every day, on the voyage to Sydney, they had a seance for an hour and a half in their state room, and a great portion of the information conveyed through Walker was taken down in writing by Mr. Peebles. Upon the recommendation of Mr. Peebles the "boy orator" was well received in Sydney, and a committee was formed, upon which there were several M P.'s. Mr. Peebles having gone on to Melbourne, Walker remained in Sydney for six weeks, where he was very successful. Having been invited by Messrs. Bettany and M'Leod to visit Auckland, he made a voyage to that place. His sojourn there, however, was anything but agreeable, although he made a few good friends who stood by him nobly. There was a prejudice against him in consequence of the teachings of his controls. Mr. Bettany, too, who had professed friendship for him, and had got into his confidence, and made overtures to enter into partnership with him, which he rejected, turned against him, and spread false reports as to his previous character and occupations—such as that he was all in his normal condition that he appeared to be in his alleged trance state, that he was engaged on the literary staff of the *Toledo Review*, that he was an acrobat, an accomplished scholar, mimic, &c. Trifles were magnified by him and others into serious charges, and every endeavor was made to injure him in the eyes of the public.

We might state that, with the intention of confirming the above facts regarding Mr. Walker, he has placed in our hands various documents and a number of letters from his mother, his brother, various persons in England and America, the Hon. J. Bowie Wilson, of Sydney, Mr. J. M. Peebles, and others. His father now works at a flour mill in Wigan, receiving £2 per week wages.

Having written the above and read it to Mr. Walker, we asked a few questions, which were readily answered.

Reporter.—Having, before you left England, written upon the subject of Spiritualism, and lectured, how is it that you did not, when you first went to America, endeavour to turn your literary and lecturing abilities to account?

Walker.—I never cared about lecturing if I could avoid it, and I went to America for the purpose of obtaining some other employment. I would prefer making my living in some other way, as it is difficult to convince the public that I am sincere in my pretensions, and the doctrines which my controls teach bring me into a notoriety which I would rather avoid. In short, I am looked upon by many as an imposter.

R.—Are you conscious of speaking, or of what you are saying, when addressing an audience in the trance state?

W.—I have some idea that I am speaking. There is a ringing sensation in the head, and it seems as if I heard my own voice in the next room. I know nothing of what I say when under control.

R.—What sensation do you experience when going into the trance state?

W.—It is difficult to describe it. I feel at first dizzy, and then as if I were inflated and carried off.

R.—How do you feel when you recover from the trance state, after having lectured?

W.—My head is clear, but there is a slight soreness of the chest.

R.—Does trance lecturing affect your health?

W.—No. My lungs are sound, and my general health is very good.

R.—What authors have you read?

W.—My reading has been confined chiefly to books of travel, novels, and newspapers.

R.—Have you read the works of Bacon, Newton, Swedenborg, Davis, Huxley, or Tyndall?

W.—No. I have not read any scientific or philosophical works.

R.—You state you are attended or controlled by a band of spirits?

W.—Yes; there is a number, but only four of them are lecturers.

R.—Are they all of equal ability?

W.—No; John Knowles, who lectures on scientific subjects, is the ablest. The Rev. John Stewart, who treats on history and theology, comes next. Thomas W. Knox, who speaks on miscellaneous practical subjects, is not so good. There is another—the best of all, who has spoken through me only six times—that is, Giordano Bruno, who takes scientific subjects.

R.—Why has he not spoken oftener?

W.—Because my physical system is not always in a fit condition for him to take possession. Fasting, for instance, would be necessary; and I am always ill before the lecture.

R.—Are any other members of your family mediumistic?

W.—Yes; two younger brothers have been developed since I left home. Many wonderful manifestations occur through their mediumship—slate writing, trance-speaking, &c.—*Otago Daily Times*, June 19th.

MATERIALISATION PHENOMENA AT CARDIFF.

A Spirit Assumes the Form, Partakes of Food, and Vanishes from Sight.

(*From the Medium and Daybreak.*)

Dear Mr. Burns,—The wave of materialisation phenomena which seems just now to be passing over the spiritualistic world has not left this locality untouched. Since Christmas last, our private circle (for the purpose of whose meetings Mr. Lewis has kindly set apart a room at his residence, Montgomery Terrace, Roath), has patiently sat two evenings in every week for the development of these phenomena. I need not trouble you with the details of its gradual progress. You are familiar with the "day of small things" in these matters, the first few faint raps, then the appearance of the tiny luminous cloud moving and shifting to and fro, the growth of this cloud in size and distinctness as the power gets stronger, its gradually assuming more definite shape, and finally, after a number of persevering sittings, the *debut* from the cabinet of the fully materialised form, arrayed in gracefully flowing garments of dazzling whiteness. One of the best possible proofs of the genuineness of spiritualistic phenomena is the watching their growth from an almost imperceptible beginning to the extraordinary and substantial developments which they afterwards attain.

Our circle is no promiscuous one. There is no pecuniary element in our meetings, but simply the honest and divinely inspired desire for truth and spiritual knowledge. It is not even instituted for scientific investigation and experiment (though I have every sympathy with circles honestly erected on this basis). Every sitting is emphatically a religious service of the most sacred kind. We do not therefore indulge in anything in the shape of ordinary tests, but we have instead as proofs of the reality of the phenomena, first, their gradual growth and extension week after week under our very eyes, and second (best test of all) the tried integrity and known incapability of deceit of the friend to whose mediumship we are indebted for our opportunities of observation, and the proved good faith of his controls during the past eighteen months. At the same time, our experience (which tallies with that of many others who have sat under the same conditions) is that the controlling intelligences have, voluntarily and unsolicited, favored us with tests both of genuineness and spirit-identity of a more conclusive nature than any we could have ourselves devised.

We have had the medium in view at the same time with the spirit-form; we have had a direct writing in various styles done by the form while in the middle of the circle; we have seen two forms at once, in the one case those of an Indian maiden holding by her side a little child, and in the other case, those of a tall male figure, bearing a child in his arms; the black hand of a little Indian girl has been frequently protruded from the cabinet, and used in such a way as to prove its complete flexibility; the substantiality of the forms have been proved to us by touch, by their handling material objects in our sight in the most decided way, stopping and setting on the musical box, advancing to the centre of the circle and stamping with the foot, exhibiting the hands, bare feet, and knee; breathing on the hands of the sitters; sitting in the chair at the table, and writing, and sitting at the organ, pressing down the bellows, and causing the notes to speak. One of our spirit-friends, the father of one of the sitters, is accustomed, after establishing the fact of his temporary materiality by pressing heavily on the heads of the sitters, and striking their hands, to dematerialise in our sight, the head sinking gradually until within about a foot of the floor, where it remains until dissipated into a white fleecy cloud, which slowly drifts back into the cabinet. This dematerialisation is a proof that there is no transfiguration of the medium of the kind "M.A. (Oxon.)" has recently written about. We have also had the direct voice to a small extent, single words (uttered with great difficulty) having been heard and understood on several occasions. The robes in which these forms appear are a marvel in themselves, being of a brilliant whiteness, without a single crease, and some of them containing at the lowest estimate from fifteen to twenty yards of material. "Snowdrop," whose *forte* is the materialisation of shawls, has given us many curious illustrations of her art. These shawls are materialised sometimes in our view outside the cabinet, and at other times inside and then brought out, where they grow larger or diminish in our sight They are sometimes of a thick, heavy texture (as we have ascertained by touch); at other times they are very large, and of a gauzy semi-transparent appearance; at other times like lace of the most intricate pattern.

These phenomena, occurring as a rule in a good light, have from time to time been witnessed, and can be testified to by about twenty-five different persons, men and women of intelligence and uprightness, whose good faith, integrity, and ability to observe and judge for themselves it would be ridiculous to call in question—some of them at first sceptical, but now happily numbered among the faithful. What will our orthodox friends, who are bound to believe that in the mouth of two or three witnesses (not to mention *twenty-five*) shall every word be established, say to this?

Up to the present time more than a dozen distinct individualities have manifested themselves (sometimes seven or eight in one evening) of both sexes, of all ages, from the little child to the aged adult, and exhibiting different physical peculiarities and marked mental distinctions. Some of them have given tests of identity of the most convincing kind, and among them are included relatives and friends of the sitters, and fellow-townsmen recently deceased.

As before intimated, our seances are actual religious services. Every effort is made to impress the sitters with a consciousness of the solemnity of the occasion, so as to induce a properly receptive

frame of mind. The consequence is that our evenings are harmonious and therefore pleasant and successful in the extreme. We believe in a policy of discriminating exclusiveness. No doubt there is a necessity in the present stage of the movement for public and paid circles. Those who are fitted for this branch of work will take it up. But there is also a necessity for strictly private and select circles, where the conditions shall be rigidly kept by a number of persons who meet time after time, without addition to their number, in order that phenomena which it is impossible to develope in more promiscuous circles may be cultivated, and the results given to the world through the press by credible persons. This stimulates other circles by showing what can be done, and it is in these circles that development of new and more advanced phenomena take place. Having this policy in view, we are careful as to the introduction of strangers. Only one at a time is admitted, who must not only be a friend of one of the members, but known to be a person fitted to enjoy and profit by the privilege. Mere sightseers, curiosity-mongers, bigoted sectarians, and people with unfavorable "dominant ideas," we have no sympathy with, and such individuals might as well expect to grasp the moon as to enter the sacred precincts of our "Temple of Light." We know the men and women who suit us, and whom we deem worthy to have the privilege conferred upon them—those who are thirsting for spiritual enlightenment, and are not afraid to face the truth and acknowledge it. It is no doubt to this exclusiveness, which keeps the conditions at a superior elevation, that we owe the advanced phenomena we obtain. When anything special is attempted we are obliged to shut out visitors entirely.

On the evening of Sunday, the 3rd inst., our circle assembled under specially stringent conditions which, with a view to completeness, I may as well mention, viz.. abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and animal food, throughout the day (an easy matter for us, since we all, more or less, completely abjure these things), absolute fasting after the mid-day meal, and the indulgence in a bath (a very practical sort of baptism, and no doubt similar to the origin, with the same special purpose in view, of that now empty and misunderstood ceremony), prior to entering the circle-room. This preparation was in order to ensure the purity of the magnetic emanations from the circle.

The occasion was a solemn one, being no other than a leave-taking between the members of the circle and one (the beloved spirit-wife of one of the sitters, who passed from this earthly sphere some twelve months since), who has taken a prominent part in these materialisation seances, and who was about to enter a higher sphere.

After the opening of the meeting by the reading of an invocation and the singing of a hymn, we waited patiently until at length there issued from the cabinet and stood in our midst the fully materialised form of our spirit-friend, clad in robes of such snowy and dazzling whiteness as forcibly to remind us of the "shining garments" of those other glorified spirits who, eighteen hundred years ago, stood within the sepulchre. Taking from the table a bouquet of flowers, she presented them, in turn, to some of the sitters to inhale their fragrance, an offering symbolical of many bright and beautiful spiritual truths. Then, as we stood up to receive her, she took from the table a platter containing food in the shape of a few biscuits, and herself handed them round to those present one by one. Retiring a little distance she took up a small piece of cake and "did eat before us." We then sat down, and she came round handing us pieces of cake. Our spirit-friend then several times traversed to and fro the entire length of the room, and to prove her substantiality, opened and shut the room door. After this she again advanced to the table, and taking therefrom a tumbler containing milk, she again passed round the room handing the tumbler to each in succession, for the purpose of taking a sip of the contents; in doing this she had several times to return to the cabinet to gain fresh power, but eventually succeeded in favoring all the sitters in this way, she herself in each case, handing and receiving back the tumbler. Finally, she retired and stood a few feet from the curtains, and raising the tumbler to her lips, was clearly observed to drink a portion of the remaining contents; the sound of drinking was quite audible, and the gentleman to whom the tumbler had last been handed, having noticed on his returning it that it was about half full, stated that its contents had palpably diminished since our spirit-friend applied it to her lips.

The solemn feast being over, our friend retired into the cabinet, and from thence rapped out a message that she would try and walk down stairs. It was found that at the moment there was more light in the hall than the temporarily materialised form could withstand safely; she however took the arm of Mr. Lewis, walked across the room, passed with him through the door, up a few steps just outside, and across the upper landing as far as the door of a room opposite, and then returned. The distance between the cabinet and the point thus reached, having been measured, is found to be about thirty-five feet. This extraordinary effort was repeated. The fanlight in the hall having now been darkened, our friend again took the arm of Mr. Lewis and proceeded with him downstairs as far as the hall door (which we could hear touched) and back again. This is a distance of about fifty feet from the cabinet. This too was repeated. A third time the effort was made, but without the same success, the power becoming weak, and our friend having to retreat rapidly to the cabinet. During this experiment it was imperative on the sitters to remain seated, to avoid interfering with the magnetic cord linking the medium and the materialised form together.

After this, standing at the table in full view, she gave through the alphabet (the direct voice not being sufficiently distinct in articulation to be intelligible) the following message, "I shall go, after to-night, to a higher sphere." In answer to questions, she intimated that she had no hesitation whatever in passing through the change, that afterwards she could only come amongst us when the conditions were very superior, that this change was analogous to the physical process of death, but without its gloom and terror, and concluded with the message "God bless you all. Go on in the good work." She shook hands with each one present (placing two or three of her fingers in contact with the sitters', but not grasping hold), by way of farewell, and leading her husband to a vacant seat which she placed beside her, embraced and kissed him. After having thus (like one of old) talked with us, eaten and drunk with us, shown the hands and the feet, and left her blessing upon our circle, she was parted from us, re-entered the cabinet, and "vanished out of our sight." Thus ended one of the most affecting and impressive seances I have ever been present at.

The medium, as might be expected, exhibited indications of considerable exhausted vitality.

This lady, prior to her final ascension to a higher sphere of usefulness and happiness, has since shown herself to us again, walked downstairs into the hall, and shown herself to and touched a lady there. She has left messages in direct writing, which we have seen her execute—"God's truth is hidden; search and you will find;" and, specially for her husband, by way of consolation, the message, "I am always with you, even unto the end," and signed with her name.

A more practical commentary upon the occurrences recorded in the last chapter of St. Luke's gospel than the above plain statement of facts (authenticated as below), I am unable to conceive. Who can fail to see the parallel, with the accompanying modification necessarily caused by different locality, age, nationality, and surrounding circumstances.

I cannot close this account without acknowledging our gratitude to the controlling intelligences, whose goodness and earnestness in assisting us to demonstrate the reality of an after-life and a spiritual sphere have been without limit, and to the gentleman whose mediumistic gift has been generously put at our service for the same purpose.

We testify to the occurrence in our presence of the incidents above narrated:—

Rees Lewis,
James A. Hogg,
Mary C. Hogg,
S. F. Wayland,
Emma Wayland,
Florence Wayland,
Taliesin Williams,
Moses Williams,
Charles Baker,
John Andrews.

Yours sincerely,
A. J. Smart.

3, Guildford-street, Cardiff,
June 10th, 1877.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF SPIRITUALISM.

By D. D. Home.
Virtue & Co. London, 1877.

An unnecessary book, an incomplete book, and an ungenerous book. It is another evidence of the lack of judgment and finer feeling which may belong to a medium, though in this case only a physical one. The merits it possesses are of the order more fitted for the ephemeral periodical literature of the movement than for its permanent volumes, and these are cast into the shade by the utter falsehood of perspective which vitiates its every page.

As a cursory sketch of the well-worn historical aspect of Spiritualism, the first divisions form a not particularly accurate, and a not peculiarly faulty review.

But Modern Spiritualism is swallowed up in the personality of the author, which occupies the whole horizon of his apprehension, utterly obliterating the mass of its evidences, and the ranks of its able exponents; the picture being still further heightened by judicious layers of the very blackest hue, brought into prominent contrast with the light on the central figure, displayed thus to considerable advantage as Abdiel-like "among the faithless faithful only he."

A Christian Spiritualist, a superb physical medium, an egotist, and an easy writer, the reader cannot fail to grasp the kernel of this mass of prose which forms a handsome volume of over 400 pages under the above title.

The light of Modern Spiritualism typified in Mr. Home, and its shadows in those who differ from or rival him. It is to be regretted that such talents as he possesses have been obscured by an unbalanced self-esteem, for there is promise in the earlier chapters of something considerably better than he has ever yet given us.

Its pretensions to rank as an even journalistic effusion on the present dispensation are simply absurd. It is merely a splenetic assault on particular instances often unfairly represented.

MESMERISM, SPIRITUALISM, ETC.

By W. B. Carpenter, C.B., Etc.

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The two lectures in which these interesting subjects are "historically and scientifically considered," occupy 115pp. of very large print. There is an appendix of 48pp., which resembles nothing so closely as the penny almanacs, wherein an *olla podrida* of useful information as to the age of the Queen, and the state of the nation, may be obtained by the inquiring. Altogether there are just 150 pages too many in this most valuable of reprints. The 32 pages of advertisements which, after the custom of modern book-binding, help to swell this certainly not "unpretending little volume," may possess some quality which will redeem the hopeless imbecility of the remainder. But it is a heavy load they have to bear. An attack upon Spiritualism it is not, and dangerous it never can be to anything, except the author's reputation.

A writer who finds the opportunity of being painfully verbose on the above questions, while he is supposed to consider "odylism," "the Pendule Explorateur," and delusions generally as well in such a space, must surely glow in altogether unenviable literary and scientific attainments. Having been detected in open falsehood by Mr. Crookes, and in the most glaring misrepresentation by Mr. A. R. Wallace, he has burned to display himself further to the public in the character of a child's story-teller.

It is quite refreshing in these days of universal knowlede to come suddenly upon so fine a fossil as the learned Dr.

A man who still firmly believes that the Fox girls deluded the public by flexible toe-joints, that Mesmerism was the dream of a German mountebank, and that there has been nothing further in the manifestations of the last ten years worthy of notice, except his own cleverness in not studying them, is, in a pathological point of view, a most fascinating spectacle.

To notice that the experiments of Perty, Aksakoff and their compeers in Europe and America are not quoted or criticised, that the nice little Sunday school anecdotes of deceitful clairvoyantes do not bear upon the cases in which all possibility of error or fraud has been removed, is of course an idle task. The pamphlet requires only to be read beside of Mr. Crookes' to understand the difference between the scientist and the mere egotist. It is too feeble to be harmful, and too trite to be amusing; probably written by some astute occultist, in order to expose the weakness of orthodox materialism. In this case some injustice has been done the self-styled savant, whose name appears on the title page, followed by seventeen letters (no doubt of mystic meaning), two fully expressed honors, an etc., and a superfluous notice that "all rights are reserved!" Who *could* infringe them? Not Duns Scotus himself!

ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM A LATE RESPECTED PREACHER.

We present to the readers of this paper further communications from Jas. Martin; and, while doing so, take the opportunity to refer to some remarks in the *Spectator* of the 11th inst., called forth by those previously given in the *Harbinger*. Did space permit, we should have liked to have given the *Spectator's* strictures, and to have commented on them. It will be sufficient, however, to say that the tendency of these remarks is not only to heap abuse on the medium through whom the communications were received, but to attach such a stigma to Spiritualism generally as betrays a vicious desire on the part of the writer to crush that of which he knows not the value, and of which he is evidently greatly afraid lest it should become the means of enlightening the minds of those who are only kept under the sway of the clergy by a dogmatism which possesses not a particle of common sense. It is very refreshing to find the writer of these remarks in the *Spectator*—probably a clergyman himself—calling names which imply the very worst characteristics, especially when he and his own class are doing so much to enlighten men's minds! The following are some of the current utterances of popular clergymen in this city, and we leave it to our readers to ask who are the "doctrinal ghouls" which infest society, and with "unclean paws" deal with things of the most sacred character. Within the last month a preacher in this city, the Rev. J. O. F., in the face of the intelligence of several hundred hearers, remarked that "he believed that Adam and Eve fell within twenty-four hours of their creation, and that he could give his reasons for it." The reasons, however, he kept to himself. Another of the same character said:—"He wished he might never think another thought of his own. The text, 'I hate vain thoughts,' should be read, 'I hate thoughts.'" What a libel on the manhood of independent thought, that God-given faculty, whereby we are to grow into higher states of being! Another clergyman gave forth as the heads of his discourse the following:—"My brethren, there is but one way of salvation, and that a difficult one. That way cannot be discovered, excepting the Holy Spirit reveals it to a man. You see, therefore, how well deserved is the condemnation of that man who fails to enter that way." And I can easily imagine the sage writer in the *Spectator* discoursing thus:—"My brethren, we believe in the life everlasting. Therefore we believe our departed friends still live. As a consequence, we believe that they bend over us in love; but, my brethren, cursed is that man who presumes to lift his heart to receive their loving influence." Now, these utterances, and many other statements equally as absurd and contradictory, are made continually in a spirit which brooks no contradiction. Are not these men the "doctrinal ghouls," and the real obstructionists to mental and spiritual progress? I may add that, the editor of the *Harbinger* is not in any way responsible for these communications beyond the insertion of them in his paper. But we leave the reader to judge if they savour either of hypocrisy, folly, or infidelity. As to the appellation of "unclean medium," we decline the compliment, but impute the use of such a phrase on the part of the writer in the *Spectator* rather to the confused state of his mind, which, in consequence of his "ghoulish" doctrine, has become demented, and thus unable to distinguish between the true and the false, than that he had any intention to apply such an epithet as "doctrinal ghoul" to any fellow being; for surely the charity which thinketh no evil forbids it.

We now ask the readers attention to the following questions and answers:—

What are your views of prayer and worship in general, with the necessity, if any, for such?

There is a depth of meaning in the yearnings of the human spirit after the invisible objects of its desire. Sympathy binds all spiritual existences together; there is a mutual dependence, which, operating at all periods of growth, draws one particle to the other—the less to the greater; the lower to the higher. Prayer is the expression of the desire to rise, and worship is the amalgamation of the elements when they come into contact. Thus prayer and worship are two distinct terms; prayer the act by which worship is consummated. From this it may be seen that both prayer and worship are operations of the human faculties which are essential to progress and growth into higher states. Like the creeping vine, the force of life within leads it to rise up, that it may entwine its tendrils around the branches of the tree, and then, having reached the object of its search, it surrounds it lovingly and trustfully, and there learns to gather increased strength for higher attainments. So it is with man in his growth; the sympathy with higher states of being which he possesses, leads him to seek more advanced spirits around which his aspirations may entwine, and thus rise upwards, and ever upwards to the Infinite source of his being. Of the nature and value of prayer the world is comparatively ignorant; and what shall I say of the Church, that it also has substituted the *form* for the *reality*, and so lost sight of the great ends which instinctively the human mind is ever seeking in its onward progress. The object of prayer is to reach a higher degree of life, higher in its conceptions, and in its manifestations; and wherein are to be realised the more harmonious operations of all the faculties of being. Hence it is the very act of healthy growth, and the evidence of progress. In true prayer, as in the operations of

nature, there is "no speech nor language;" it is a silent march onwards and upwards towards the soul's ideal.

But does not man need stimulating in this direction; and will not what is called public prayer in churches, or elsewhere, accomplish this object?

Human intercourse, when properly conducted, will stimulate individuals to seek higher states of life. If public prayers, as they are called, are conducted with this object, the well-disposed mind will profit thereby. If in an intelligible manner I lead you to reflect on the advantages to be gained by the use of certain means, then I become to you a helper to the extent of awakening your faculties, but I can carry you no farther than that. In prayer there should be realised the possible acquirement of all the attainments of which the human mind can conceive; and along with this, there should be the act of seeking it. When a man stands at the foot of a ladder, which he feels the necessity of ascending, something more is needed than the mere contemplation of his means of climbing; indeed he scarcely thinks of this, but at once proceeds to propel himself upwards. Instinctively he uses the means at his command, and thus rises step by step until he attains the summit. If any instruction be needed, it is to call his attention to the fact that he has within his grasp the means of ascent.

Will you make the idea of worship a little plainer to me?

Worship, as I have said, is an amalgamation of the elements which seek union, in consequence of the sympathy existing. The human mind worships everything which appears to be above it until it reaches the great source of all existence. By this I mean that the mind clings to superior elements—reverences, trusts and confides in that which it deems above itself, from a sense of desire to reach it. This is the secret of that upward progress which indicates the incessant march of all spirit life towards the great centre of the universe. Worship, in one word, signifies union of elements; a harmonious combination, by means of which higher attainments are obtained.

Prayer, then, as an operation of the spiritual faculties of man, and worship, as the natural result, will be as common and necessary to the life after death as they are now in the earth life?

Undoubtedly, and as much more so as the results of a keener appreciation of the objects to be gained, and the means by which the end may be secured. If I could but give you the faintest representation of the reality of conscious life in this higher sphere, you would at once be overwhelmed by the considerations involved. And yet your experiences in this respect, even in the earth life, are as capable of enlargement and improvement, as is the distance which prevails between your actual means of attainment and the realisation which you might enjoy of its result, when compared with the low position you occupy as the consequence of a feeble attempt to cultivate the means within your grasp. When men open their minds to receive the rays of light which the spirit world seeks to concentrate upon them, then in that awakening an impulse will be given to human growth which shall reveal more fully the nature of prayer, and of worship, and render apparent the advantages of these, as of all the other operations of man's spiritual nature.

In what way would you teach men to fashion their ideas of the Divine Being; and is it necessary to dwell very much on such thoughts?

You have set me a task which the wisest men of past ages have been unable to accomplish, and which is equally as difficult to me now, as it was when in the earth life, I endeavoured to instruct my fellow men concerning God, and man's duty in relation to Him. Who is God? What is God? How shall I answer? The very essence of universal life; the source of all being; but which, excepting as it is manifested in forms distinguishable by man, could never be known. Hence it requires an effort on man's part to obtain, in any degree, a knowledge of the Divine Being. Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Yes; it is thus He becomes separated, as it were, from yourself individually, that he may by this means be more perfectly known. It is equally true, that while God is in all things, all things are in God; for there can be no real separation between Him and all things which exist. Tell me, could you grasp the universal infinity? then might you know God. At the best you can but realise a part of His ways, and so much only as stands related to yourself and your surroundings. Within you, and around you, then, God is to be known—the sublime and all pervading Essence of the Universal Being. It is on this basis that all knowledge of God rests, and that knowledge ever must be of an inferential character; for men draw out the conceptions which they possess of God from what they realise within themselves, and see in nature around them. And the more orderly the operations of the human mind, the clearer, more satisfying, and effective will be their knowledge of God. It is in this sense that a man is said to be "a law unto himself;" the revealment of God in him in its purest and most influential form leading him to live a life at once in harmony with the order of nature, and thus, while he advances from one degree of existence to another, he grows in the conception of what God really is, in proportion as he reflects more fully the image of that Infinite One. You ask me how I would speak of God to my fellow men? Apart from man, God cannot be defined, inasmuch as man is the representation of God in a finite degree, and into whose nature there flow all the elements of the Divine. Hence I would say, that in the mirror of your own nature you will find the most complete conception of what God is to you—a pure, loving, and orderly being—if your character partakes of these elements; while if, on the contrary, there is a gross, sensual, and disorderly organisation, then your God will partake of like characteristics.

In what light are we to regard the various descriptions of the Divine Being which we have in books that profess to treat of Him?

In books you have a transcript of human thought; and all the attempts at defining God which have been made, either verbally or through writings, can be nothing more than the expression of human thought, as that thought has conceived of Him.

But is there no standard by which we may judge of the correctness, or otherwise, of such statements?

The only standard of judgment is to be found in the attributes of the human mind, when harmoniously combined, and properly cultivated; and it is on this principle that rising from the lowest form of intelligence to the highest of which you could conceive, is the degree in which God, the Infinite source of all things, will be better known.

Is it right to conceive of God as a person?

If by so doing, man would derive any additional assistance, why not? Even though his idea was purely supposititious, if it best suited his mental capacity, and was calculated to lead into a more harmonious development, then it should be everything to him. There is such an endless diversity of human capacity, that what is adapted to one might be quite unsuited to another.

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Again we have an opportunity of speaking together. Will you continue your remarks on the question of last Sunday?

Yes; I am impressed with the very great importance of a right conception of the idea, which the human mind should cultivate concerning the Infinite source of existence.

Are we justified in believing that God can manifest the emotions which are common to man, such as love—anger—pity—revenge, &c., &c.?

"No; you are not. It is not thus you are to think of God the Infinite. These are characteristics of man, the fit expressions of a finite manifestation; but with the All-Supreme His governmental operations are regulated by laws, which in their uniformity exclude the possibility of such contradictions as these imperfect manifestations of man's emotional faculties exhibit. So far as we can discover, in the operation of the Divine Government of man, and the visible universe, we have the most explicit evidence that the Infinite One designs to accomplish certain ends in relation to His Infinite will and purpose as affecting man, and in this respect there can be no flaw, no possibility of failure, no need for change, but one undeviating course, whereby to a hair's breadth His will shall be accomplished, although in man's experience from time to time there may seem to arise the strangest contradictions. You may plainly see what kind of being God would be if His creatures were addicted to judge of His character by the imperfect operations of their own nature. In some instances the better emotions would prevail, while in others the most objectionable; and thus, on such a basis as this, God would become a perfect monster of contradictions, with as many sides and aspects as there are different dispositions among men. Do not weary yourself by attempting to fathom the Divine existence, but rather be satisfied to live in harmony with those laws which He has connected with your conscious being; and in the study of these laws learn to recognise what He would have you be and do; and thus shall your estimate of Him at one and the same time ennoble your nature, and satisfy the craving to know what He is, and how He should be thought of.

From what you now know and experience, do you think it will ever be possible for man to realise God as he does the personal existence of his fellow being?

The higher man rises in his progressive existence I believe that he will be better able to comprehend what God is; but to answer your question in the affirmative would be to admit that man could ever partake of the Infinite capacity which we must believe belongs to the supreme source of all things. That would be an assumption of so vain a character, that I should be sorry to entertain it for one moment. Man will ever have within and around him the evidence of a first great cause, and that evidence will grow as he advances through successive circles of experiences; but God can never be reached. From His works here, and the operations of this higher sphere, I realise a more satisfying conception of God than I did in the earth life, but I might still say, "Lo, these are parts of His ways; but how little a portion is heard of them? But the whole compass of His being, who can understand?"

What have you to say respecting the second part of my question, viz.—Is it necessary to dwell much on the thought of the Being of God?

When you look at nature around you in spring time, you see life breaking forth from all its pores, and you are ever conscious in yourself of a like experience. Does not this lead the thought naturally to an underlying force, which, when intelligently con-

templated, suggests the idea of the dependence of all things on that underlying force. Now, a sense of dependence is calculated to strengthen, when that dependence rests on a solid basis. It is this which gives the little child courage to make the attempt to walk when it knows that the parent is near to save it from falling. And, in like manner, all through life man would be strengthened to put forth with greatest vigor his realised powers, when he felt that his faculties for action were upborne by an Infinite intention to make these attempts successful. This sense of dependence cannot be better, or more happily cultivated, than by constantly realising the existence of the Infinite One, as engaged in the work of carrying on man's existence to the noblest climax.

Should this sense of dependence be manifested in any particular form?

It should become the constant habit of life—the link which should bind your every pulsation of being to Him from whom you receive the power to live; and the greater your regard for His manifested will, exemplified in obedience to his laws becomes, in like degree will be the measure of strength, harmony, and happiness which you will enjoy. I would say, in conclusion, that the thought of God should have the effect of elevating men individually, and of binding them closer in the bonds of brotherhood, so that, as the result, the universal conception of the Infinite Being may be purified, and be rendered more influential in alleviating the sorrows, and of increasing the joys of a common humanity. Ever remember that above the stormy atmosphere of earth life there is a plane of existence which, like the beautiful calm after the storm, manifests those higher qualities of being which, after all, are but the result of the development which has been going on, and leading thereto.—JAS. MARTIN.

H. J. B.

East Melbourne, August 15th, 1877.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE library and reading-room has been fairly attended during the past month, though but few tickets have as yet been issued. We would call the attention of friends in the country to the advantages offered by the Association; the office and reading-room being a rendezvous for Spiritualists, not only available to themselves but to any of their acquaintances who may be visiting the metropolis. Each member subscribing 5s. per quarter or upwards, is furnished with several tickets which they can fill in, admitting the bearer to the reading-room for a week, thus enabling them to peruse at their leisure all the best Spiritualistic literature, including the latest periodicals and papers, among which are to be found, "The Spiritual Scientist," "The Shaker," and "Hull's Crucible," papers not accessible to ordinary readers.

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